

## ONE MAN'S OPINIONS

BY N. D. COCHRAN

**A Worthless Life.**—Before he killed himself Christian Wolf wrote a letter in which he said: "God forgive me for this. I am a worthless dog. Have only thought of myself during life and God forgive me. I have spent it foolishly."

Elsewhere in the letter he wrote: "To be called a piker and having a yellow streak as I have is right. Never show yours, boys. I have had one all my life. Take my worthless body to Fred Klaner's morgue. Let him have it cremated and scatter the ashes to the wind. Say, 'Here goes nobody.'"

The first sentence of the last quotation isn't clear, but I take it that he meant that if the statement was made that he was a piker and had a yellow streak, the statement was correct. The remainder of that quotation isn't important, because it makes no difference what is done with the body; and, of course, the body is worthless, just as any other dead body is worthless.

Whether it be buried or cremated makes no difference. When life passes from the body all that made anybody love him was gone.

The big thing in the letter was this statement: "I am a worthless dog. Have thought only of myself during life and God forgive me. I have spent it foolishly."

Even if it were true that he spent his life foolishly while living, he may have spent it profitably for others by committing suicide and writing that letter. It will make his friends think. Perhaps some of them are thinking only of themselves and are spending their lives foolishly. Possibly some of them are sacrificing the best emotions of the human soul by devoting all of their best energies to making money.

It's safe to assume that most of his friends are doing just what he says he did—leading a selfish life. And any

man who leads a selfish life is a piker.

I believe that very few of the men whom the world calls successful die happy. Not many of them will as frankly admit their disappointment with themselves as Wolf did. Wolf himself wouldn't admit it while he was living and where he would have to face the ridicule of his fellows.

Had he done so doubtless his business associates and friends would have thought there was something wrong with his head. Yet this letter indicates that there was a lot of good in him that he was afraid to let out.

I think most of us are that way. We have unselfish thoughts, but haven't the courage to be ourselves and give way to our emotions.

We are too much afraid of what others will say or think; and yet they may have the same secret thoughts we have. All of us are cowards. If we could accurately weigh all the good and bad in any of us we would probably find that our secret opinion of ourselves is much the same as the opinion Chris Wolf had of himself when he wrote that letter.

We find it easy enough to fool our friends, but we can't fool ourselves.

I might go on writing in these columns so as to build up for myself, in the estimation of my readers, a wholly fictitious character. I might make you believe that my thoughts are always pure, holy and good. I might make you believe there is no selfishness in me and that I am entirely altruistic.

But I would know better myself. I couldn't escape the knowledge that I haven't the courage to say all that I really think, and that I am weak enough to be putting forward my best side.

I know that when I reflect and cast up accounts it is mighty hard work trying to make the good balance the bad. But somehow or other it doesn't worry me to know that I am too human to ever have any chance of being perfect.

And the days and years I have